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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/786,502	02/24/2004	Adnan Shennib	022176-000210US / IHS/002	4013
7590	03/21/2005		EXAMINER	
Sharon R. Kantor c/o: InSound Medical, Inc. 37500 Central Court Newark, CA 94560			HARVEY, DIONNE	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2643	

DATE MAILED: 03/21/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/786,502	SHENNIB ET AL.
	Examiner Dionne N Harvey	Art Unit 2643

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
 - If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
 - If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
 - Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-130 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-103 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 104-130 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 24 February 2004 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____. |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____. | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____. |

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. Figure 3 should be designated by a legend such as --Prior Art-- because only that which is old is illustrated. See MPEP § 608.02(g). Corrected drawings in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Specification

1. Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure.

The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of 50 to 150 words. It is important that the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "said," should be avoided. The abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details.

The language should be clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid using phrases which can be implied, such as, "The disclosure concerns," "The disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. **Claims 129 and 130** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Regarding claim 129, lines 4-5 recite "a venting system ... for enabling delivery of sound to the tympanic membrane...". However, according to **page 22 of the Applicant's specification** and referring to figure 11, the venting system **46** acts to provide occlusion relief but does not enable sound delivery. It appears that the sound delivery is provided by sound channel **45**, and not by a "vent" as claimed. Correction is required.

Regarding claim 130, lines 4-6 recite "means operatively associated with the tube portion ... for delivering received sounds to an acoustically sealed space about the eardrum and concurrently directing occlusion sounds away from the eardrum". This claim is rejected for the same reasons set forth in the rejection of claim 129 above, since according to the Applicant's disclosure, no single "means" functions to both, deliver received sounds and to direct occlusion sounds away from the eardrum. Correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and

the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claim 128 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Haroldson U.S. 6,094,494 in view of Brimhall U.S. 6,359,993.

Regarding claim 128, in **figure 2A**, Haroldson teaches a tubular insert 50 for an ear canal of a wearer, comprising: a sound conduction tube 58 constructed and adapted for removable connection to a sound receiver module (**see transducer 39 in figure 3**) of a hearing device, for comfortable insertion into and removal from the ear canal as **illustrated in figure 2D and 2C**, and when inserted, to deliver sound received by the module to the tympanic membrane **via sound tube 41**; and at least one appendage 50 on the sound conduction tube 58 to establish a substantially acoustically sealed space (**see figure 2D which illustrates that balloon-50 forms a sealed chamber with the tympanic membrane-28**) in which the sound is to be delivered to the tympanic membrane.

Haroldson does not clearly teach that another appendage is provided on the sound conduction tube or on the sound receiver module for cooperating with said at least one appendage to direct occlusion sounds away from the tympanic membrane when said tubular insert is connected to said sound receiver module and worn in the ear canal.

Brimhall teaches, **in figure 2**, that a conformal tip 10 and its' attached hearing device, may be provided with an appendage 83,84 which serves to vent that chamber defined by the innermost end of the conformal tip and the tympanic membrane. It would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to

substitute the vented balloon of Brimhall for the un-vented balloon of Haroldson, for the purpose of "allowing sound waves that are generated within a user's head to naturally propagate to the ambient environment, thereby significantly reducing or eliminating acoustic feedback to the wearer", **see column 7, lines 25-29 of Brimhall.**

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

4. **Claims 104-130** are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over **claims 1-80 of U.S. Patent No. 6,724,9047**. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because of obvious wording variations. For example, claims 104 and 128 recite "adapted for removable connection to a receiver section" while claim 2 of **U.S. Patent No. 6,724,9047** recites "adapted to be disposable for selective replacement thereof."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dionne N Harvey whose telephone number is 703-305-1111. The examiner can normally be reached on 9-5:30 M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Curtis Kuntz can be reached on 703-305-4708. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

D. Harvey


CURTIS KUNTZ
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
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